

REMARKS

Claims 1-27 were pending in the application at the time of the last Office Action. Applicant has amended claims 1, 5, 22, and 25; canceled claims 12-21; and added claims 28 and 29. Thus, claims 1-11 and 22-29 are now pending. No new matter is added.

The Office Action rejects claims 1-5, 7-23, 26, and 27 under 35 USC § 102(e) over U.S. Patent Pub. No. 2004/093371 ("Burrows"); claim 6 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Burrows in view of U.S. Patent Pub. No. 2006/0053279; and claims 24 and 25 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Burrows in view of U.S. Patent Pub. No. 2003/0231207.

Burrows was (and continues to be) assigned to the assignee of the instant application at the time of the invention. As recognized by the Office Action, Burrows is only a reference – if at all – under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e). Thus, Burrows is disqualified as a reference under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) by 35 U.S.C. § 103(c). Therefore, claims 6, 24, and 25 are immediately allowable.

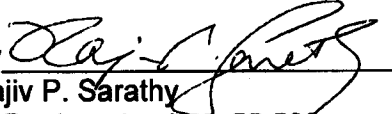
Without conceding the merits of the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e), applicants hereby amend and cancel claims to expedite allowance, and reserve their right to pursue the canceled claims in a continuation or other application.

Based on these amendments and remarks, applicants respectfully request early allowance of this application. If the Examiner has any questions or believes a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is encouraged to call the undersigned at (206) 359-6478.

Applicant believes no fee is due with this response. However, if a fee is due, please charge our Deposit Account No. 50-0665, under Order No. 418268004US from which the undersigned is authorized to draw.

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Respectfully submitted,

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